

# Threatened and Endangered Species in Forests of Wisconsin

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For more information, contact

[Eunice.Padley@dnr.state.wi.us](mailto:Eunice.Padley@dnr.state.wi.us)

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# Acadian Flycatcher

(*Empidonax virescens*)

**Federal Status:** Not Listed

**State Status:** Threatened

## **Description:**

The acadian flycatcher, about 5 1/2 inches long, is greenish above and washed yellow on each side. Otherwise, it is nearly



identical in appearance to other members of its genus. The *Empidonax* group of flycatchers, all of which have a light eye-ring and whitish wing bars, are distinguished from one another during the breeding season by their songs, habitats and ranges. The best way to differentiate this bird from other flycatchers is by its emphatic vocalization, “Wee-see!” or “Pit-see!”, heard from late May to early August.

**Habitat:** Acadian flycatchers require large (>200 acres) tracts of mature (>50 years), moderately moist forests with semi-open understories. They breed primarily in southern portions of the state, preferring streamsides and

ravines. Hemlock, yellow birch and white pine forests are favored sites, along with overmature pine plantations within the extensive hardwoods of the Kettle Moraine State Forest. In the Baraboo Hills, their nests occur in the forks of hemlocks, sugar maple and witch hazel branches. In the Kettle Moraine, their nests occur in buckthorns, box elders and pines. Nests are generally 5-20 feet above the ground or water, and suspended from low, drooping branches, and typically consist of grasses, bark shreds, weed fibers, fine twigs, cocoon silk and catkins.

**Forestry Considerations:** Where these flycatchers occur, favor single-tree selection within 300 feet of year-round streams. In other areas, group selection of less than 1/4 acre will maintain relatively closed canopies and may minimize cowbird parasitism. Employ *Wisconsin's Forestry Best Management Practices for Water Quality* and provide buffers along stream corridors. Retain patches of low shrub cover and saplings when harvesting timber or when doing timber stand improvement.

This provides acadians with perches 6-21 feet above the ground from which they can forage for insects.

